

**CITY OF EAU CLAIRE
PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES**

Meeting of December 17, 2012

City Hall, Council Chambers

7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Messrs. Duax, Weld, Larson, Hibbard, Strobel, Ms. Mitchell and Ms. Ebert

Staff Present: Messrs. Tufte, Noel

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Strobel.

1. ANNEXATION (12-7A) – 4006 LaSalle Street, Town of Seymour

Mr. Tufte presented an annexation request for 1.9 acres of land in the Town of Seymour. There is a single-family home on the property, and sewer and water lines exist in LaSalle Street adjacent to the home. The land is within the sewer service area and the proposal is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. The land will be zoned R-1.

No one spoke in opposition to the proposed annexation.

Mr. Weld moved to recommend approval of the annexation. Ms. Mitchell seconded and the motion carried.

2. SITE PLAN (SP-1237) – Five Star Plastics, 1339 Continental Drive

Mr. Tufte presented a site plan request to approve a 25,211 square foot addition with parking at Five Star Plastics. This item was postponed from the last meeting because the commission wanted the applicant to be present. Sky Park Protective Covenants will apply also as the zoning for this I-1P property. The Sky Park property owner's review committee will have to give approval for this project. The covenants limit the amount of front yard parking to 10 stalls. The requirement of .6 stalls/employee per maximum shift must be maintained to meet required on-site parking. The site plan should be revised to show correct front yard parking and note any other parking change. The rear landscape screening does not match the October 2010 site plan. If changes are so desired, a new site plan showing the proposed screening shall be submitted for City Forester and Community Development Director approval.

Richard Piltz, owner of Five Star Plastics at 1339 Continental Drive, expressed concern about the tree screening requirement in the rear of his building. They will transplant existing trees and plant new trees in spring to meet screening requirements. He stated his business is good for the community, has met job expectations, and they are looking to expand employment. They have plans to expand to the east and buy more land from the City if they keep growing. The bicycle parking rack requirement was acceptable to him.

Commissioners and the applicant discussed tree screening requirements. Mr. Tufte noted to the applicant to get advice from the City's Forester on when to transplant the trees so they survive.

Mr. Duax motioned to approve the site plan, revising the tree screening requirement to include that the applicant work with the City Forester and that other appropriate tree sizes and species are acceptable to use. Ms. Ebert seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Hibbard voted nay.

3. DISCUSSION/DIRECTION

A. Accessory Dwelling Units or “Granny Flats”

Mr. Tufted presented research on accessory dwelling units and granny-flats. He stated more communities are allowing them because of changing demographics/market trends. He presented two floor plans showing how these living spaces/units are often designed with a single-family home. Some units are attached and others are detached on the property. Current code allows a family in an R-1 zoning district to live with two unrelated persons. The family could hypothetically rent rooms to these two unrelated persons. However, the dwelling must only contain one kitchen cooking facility. If two are constructed, the dwelling would technically be considered an illegal duplex in an R-1 zone. Since accessory dwelling units or granny-flats often have separate kitchens, allowing them in Eau Claire poses some questions. For instance, what happens to the home at the time of resale? Does it have to be converted back if the new owner does not have a parent living with them? Can it be rented? These and others are questions that will need to be answered.

Commissioners were in favor of conducting more research and talking with various stakeholders (realtors, lenders, builders, etc.). Ms. Ebert stated a lender will require more down payment on this type of situation because the home is viewed as a duplex. Ms. Mitchell considered it worthwhile to look into since the market is growing. Mr. Hibbard liked the Bloomington, Minnesota, ordinance example but had concerns about people taking advantage of this possible allowance in the City's older neighborhoods such as Third Ward. It was stated that some cities try it out as a pilot in one neighborhood before allowing it city-wide. Mr. Strobel had a concern on when the relative leaves what happens to the unit. Mr. Duax stated the City looked into allowing these units in the early 1980s but a decision was made to not move forward. However, now might be the time to revisit the issue. Commissioners thought only allowing one front door would help preserve the look of a single-family dwelling.

B. Construction and Demolition Research

Mr. Noel presented staff research on construction and demolition (C&D) waste recovery in the metro area. He said the area home builder association was in favor of recovering more C&D material resources but were against regulation. Staff spoke with a variety of stakeholders involved with C&D recovery (contractors, C&D waste haulers and landfills, DNR, etc.). The network of transporting, transferring, storing, landfilling, and processing facilities appears developed enough to handle recovery of certain materials such as asphalt, stone, brick, concrete, roofing shingles, clean wood, cardboard and various metals. Recovery seems to make more economic sense on larger construction and demolition projects for non-commercial and multi-family residential. If an ordinance is desired, more research needs to be conducted to figure out administration and enforcement provisions along with when the requirement is triggered; such as based on a certain value, square footage, or number of dwelling units.

The commission was generally in favor of reclaiming C&D materials that have end-markets. Mr. Strobel was not for regulation but for education. Mr. Duax believed the best course was to hold a special meeting with all the stakeholders on this topic and see what everyone has for input before drafting any ordinance. The commission agreed and staff will set a meeting up in 2013.

C. Eau Claire Bike and Pedestrian Plan – NWAPA Award

Mr. Tufte presented the Northwest - Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association award the City received for its work on the 2010 City Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

D. Code Compliance Items

None.

E. Future Agenda Items

None.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of December 3, 2012 were not approved because Secretary Pearson was not in attendance.

Tom Pearson
Secretary